

Guidance for Schools and Childcare Facilities: Students or Staff Returning from Ebola-Affected Areas

Background:

- There is an Ebola outbreak in West Africa affecting several countries including Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. Check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website (www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola) for the latest affected areas.
- The chances of getting Ebola in the US are **extremely low** unless a person traveled to an affected area and had direct contact with the blood or body fluids (e.g., vomit or diarrhea) of an Ebola-infected person.
- Fever in people who traveled to the affected areas is most likely due to more common infectious diseases in West Africa (e.g. malaria), but should still be checked by a doctor.
- Early Ebola symptoms can include fever, headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach pain.
- A person with Ebola cannot spread the disease until symptoms appear.

Recommendations for Students or Staff Returning from an Affected Area:

CDC recommends that all healthy travelers who arrive from Ebola-affected areas **check themselves for fever and other symptoms of Ebola twice daily for 21 days**, starting the day after leaving the affected area. They may continue their usual activities during this time as long as they are not symptomatic and do not have any known exposures to Ebola virus. If they had a known exposure to Ebola virus (such as direct contact with a patient sick with Ebola), then they should contact their local health department (<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/lhd>) when arriving in the US (even if they do not have symptoms) to evaluate their risk and make a plan for monitoring. If they remain healthy during the 21 days, they are not at risk for Ebola.

- If a student or staff member develops a fever within 21 days of returning from an affected area, s/he should consult with a healthcare provider **immediately**.
 - The staff member or student's parent should tell the provider about symptoms and recent travel **before** going to the office or emergency room to minimize risk to others.
- If a staff member who recently traveled to an affected area develops symptoms **during** the school day, s/he should isolate him/herself in a private room, call his/her healthcare provider **immediately**, and mention recent travel.
- If student who recently traveled to an affected area becomes sick **during** the school day, s/he should be seen by the school nurse.
 - If the nurse is not available, the student should stay in a private room until parent pick-up.
 - The parent should be told to seek **immediate** medical advice and to tell a healthcare provider about recent travel **before** going to the office or emergency room.
- If an ill student or staff member requires emergency medical care at school or at home, tell 911 or the EMS operator about the sick person's recent travel.
- The local health department should be contacted about any symptoms of Ebola reported by a student or staff member who recently traveled to an Ebola-affected area.
- Students or staff who get sick more than 21 days after returning from an Ebola-affected area **do not** need to be checked for Ebola and are not at risk for Ebola.

Contact Your Local Health Department (LHD) with Questions or Concerns

- The LHD is available to assess any potential exposures to Ebola and to help address staff or parent fear or concerns.
- Contact information for LHDs is available at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/lhd>.

For more information about Ebola, visit <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/ebola> or www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola